

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. Claims 5-13 are under consideration. Claim 5 has been amended. Support for the amendment to claim 5 may be found in Fig. 4 and in paragraph [0021] at page 4 of the specification as filed originally. This amendment is believed to place the application in condition for allowance, and entry therefore is respectfully requested. In the alternative, entry of this amendment is requested as placing the application in better condition for appeal by, at least, reducing the number of issues outstanding. Further reconsideration is requested based on the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

Response to Arguments:

The Applicants appreciate the consideration given to their arguments, as well as the implication of allowable subject matter in section 28 at page 5 of the final Office Action. The Applicants must continue to insist that U.S. Patent No. 6,409,453 to Brodine *et al.* (hereinafter "Brodine") shows no "pocket to support a wafer and self-correct a positioning error of the wafer in the pocket." Still, in the interest of compact prosecution only and *not for any reason of patentability*, claim 5 has been amended in substantial accord with the Examiner's suggestion. The Examiner's suggestion is appreciated. Further reconsideration is thus requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102:

Claims 5, 6, 7, 12, and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Brodine. The rejection is traversed to the extent it might apply to the claims as amended. Reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

The third clause of claim 5 recites:

A pocket having a flat, substantially continuous planar part to support a wafer and self-correct a positioning error of the wafer in the pocket.

Brodine neither teaches, discloses, nor suggests, "a pocket having a flat, substantially continuous planar part to support a wafer and self-correct a positioning error of the wafer in the pocket," as recited in claim 5. In Brodine, rather, the wafer is supported by shelf 150 at the free end and by shelf 154 at the fixed end, as shown in Fig. 5. The wafer is supported above main part 152, so it never touches it, let alone receives any support from it. In particular, as described at column 7, lines 66 and 67, continuing at column 8, lines 1, 2, and 3:

FIG. 5 shows a cross section of a finger 76. A shelf 150 near the free end support the wafer and provides clearance for the bottom side of a wafer above the level of

the main part 152 of the end effector 64. Another shelf 154 supports the wafer near the fixed end.

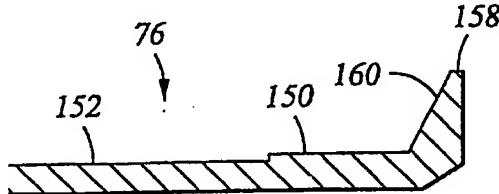
Since, in Brodine, the wafer is supported by shelf 150 at the free end and by shelf 154 at the fixed end, Brodine has no "pocket having a flat, substantially continuous planar part to support a wafer and self-correct a positioning error of the wafer in the pocket," as recited in claim 5.

Furthermore, the only wafer realignment performed in Brodine is performed by high-profile end shoe 158 at the very end of finger 76, not by a pocket. High-profile end shoe 158 is not a pocket. In particular, as described at column 8, lines 5-12:

The alternative finger 76 has a similar shelf 150 for supporting the wafer above the main part 152, but the alternative finger 76 has a high-profile end shoe 158 for laterally containing the wafer. The high-profile end shoe 158 permits the angled surface 160 to provide some slight wafer realignment if the wafer is radially offset up to about 3.7 mm, but the high profile limits the clearance of the end effector 64 in narrow spaces.

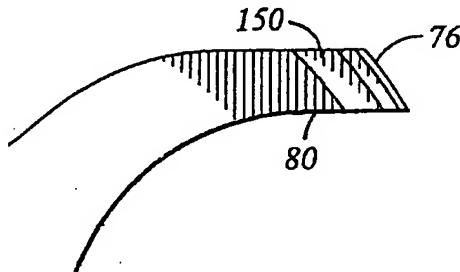
Since, in Brodine, the only wafer realignment is performed by high-profile end shoe 158 at the very end of finger 76, not by a pocket, Brodine has no "pocket having a flat, substantially continuous planar part to support a wafer and self-correct a positioning error of the wafer in the pocket," as recited in claim 5.

Further, as may be seen clearly in the detail of the very end of finger 76 shown in Fig. 6 and reproduced below, high-profile end shoe 158 is a high-profile end shoe, not a pocket.



Since, in Brodine, high-profile end shoe 158 is a high-profile end shoe, not a pocket, Brodine has no "pocket having a flat, substantially continuous planar part to support a wafer and self-correct a positioning error of the wafer in the pocket," as recited in claim 5.

In fact, as may be seen clearly in the detail of finger 76 shown in Fig. 4 and reproduced below, finger 76 is too long and thin to even have a pocket.



Claim 5 is submitted to be allowable. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 5 is earnestly solicited.

Claims 6, 7, 12, and 13 depend from claim 5 and add further distinguishing elements. Claims 6, 7, 12, and 13 are thus also submitted to be allowable. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 6, 7, 12, and 13 is also earnestly solicited.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103:

Claims 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brodine in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,925,227 to Kobayashi *et al.* (hereinafter "Kobayashi"). The rejection is traversed to the extent it might apply to the claims as amended. Reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Claims 8 and 9 depend from claim 5 and add further distinguishing elements. Brodine neither teaches, discloses, nor suggests "a pocket having a flat, substantially continuous planar part to support a wafer and self-correct a positioning error of the wafer in the pocket," as discussed above with respect to the rejection of claim 5. Kobayashi does not either, and thus cannot make up for the deficiencies of Brodine with respect to claims 8 and 9. Thus, even if Brodine were combined with Kobayashi, as proposed in the final Office Action, the claimed invention would not result. Claims 8 and 9 are thus also submitted to be allowable. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 8 and 9 is also earnestly solicited.

Claim 10:

Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brodine. The rejection is traversed to the extent it might apply to the claims as amended. Reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Claim 10 depends from claim 5 and adds further distinguishing elements. Brodine neither teaches, discloses, nor suggests "a pocket having a flat, substantially continuous planar

part to support a wafer and self-correct a positioning error of the wafer in the pocket," as discussed above with respect to the rejection of claim 5. Thus, even if Brodine were modified as proposed in the final Office Action, the claimed invention would not result. Claim 10 is thus also submitted to be allowable. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 10 is also earnestly solicited.

Claim 11:

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brodine in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0070316 to Weed et al. (hereinafter "Weed"). The rejection is traversed. Reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Claim 11 depends from claim 5 and adds further distinguishing elements. Brodine neither teaches, discloses, nor suggests "a pocket having a flat, substantially continuous planar part to support a wafer and self-correct a positioning error of the wafer in the pocket," as discussed above with respect to the rejection of claim 5. Weed does not either, and thus cannot make up for the deficiencies of Brodine with respect to claims 8 and 9. Thus, even if Brodine were combined with Weed, as proposed in the final Office Action, the claimed invention would not result. Claim 11 is thus also submitted to be allowable. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 11 is also earnestly solicited.

Conclusion:

Accordingly, in view of the reasons given above, it is submitted that all of claims 5-13 are allowable over the cited references. Allowance of all claims 5-13 and of this entire application is therefore respectfully requested.

If there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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